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PREVIEW OF CHAOS!

YOU DON'T MIND A POOR OLD LADY JOINING YOU WHILE YOU READ THIS STORY, MY DEARS, DO YOU?

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE MOON IS A LITTLE LESS THAN TWENTY-SEVEN DAYS AND EIGHT HOURS AWAY FROM THE EARTH'S SURFACE? THINK OF THAT, AS YOU READ ON...

SILENCE? WELL, WE ARE ACCUSTOMED TO MANAGE WITHOUT A WELCOME, AREN'T WE, MIDNIGHT? AH, IT'S LOVELY AND DRAFTY IN HERE!

NOW YOU SIT BY LIKE THE SLY BEAST THAT YOU ARE AND WE'LL WATCH THE TALE UNRAVEL BEFORE US! REMEMBER YOUR MANNERS NOW... MANY EYES ARE WATCHING US!

OF COURSE I COULD TELL YOU HOW IT WILL END, BUT INSTEAD I'LL JUST REST HERE AND SEW AWAY... ON THIS LOVELY SHROUD...



YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW WHO I'M MAKING IT FOR, EH? WELL, THAT'S UP TO MY RIVAL FATE... I'M JUST ONE OF THE FURIES, DRAT THE LUCK!... I'D BETTER STOP CHATTERING AND LET YOU GET ON TO THE STORY... IT ALL BEGAN AT AN EMERGENCY SESSION OF THE SENATE...



WASHINGTON, D.C. THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE ARE BAFLED AND POWERLESS. THE ONLY STEP WE CAN TAKE IS TO EVACUATE THE PEOPLE FROM THE DANGER AREA. WE WILL PROCEED THEN, GENTLEMEN, TO SELECT A COMMITTEE FOR THIS DUTY. I NOMINATE ATTORNEY TOM WRIGHT, ALL THOSE IN FAVOR...



NEW YORK CITY. RELEASE THIS COPY, MIKE. IT'S PRACTICALLY A REPEAT OF OUR LAST EDITION, BUT WE HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL TONIGHT TO GET NEWS!



BOSTON, MASS. MY FRIENDS, THIS PHENOMENAL EVENT WHICH WE ASTRONOMERS INSIST CANNOT BE IS! IT'S CAUSING COMPLETE PANIC IN CALIFORNIA, IF NOT IN THE ENTIRE UNITED STATES!... I AM ASHAMED TO ANNOUNCE... THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO!



NOW WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THAT? BUT, YOU POOR DEARS, IT ISN'T VERY CLEAR TO YOU, IS IT? WELL, JUST GLANCE AT A FEW HEADLINES!



New York Transcript
CALIFORNIA WAITS AS MOON CHARGES FROM HEAVENS! EXPECTED TO SKID AGAINST THE EARTH THERE.

CHICAGO News
CALIFORNIA TREMBLES AT PROBABLE DOOM! MASS MIGRATION IS IN EFFECT!

FLORIDA LEDGER
NO HOPE EXPECTED IN CLEARING MOON MYSTER SATELLITE NEARING EARTH.

MEANWHILE...

THERE HE IS, TOM!

WENDY! WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?

TOM, I'M FRIGHTENED. WE'RE MILES AWAY FROM CALIFORNIA, BUT IF THE MOON DOES STRIKE THE EARTH, WHO KNOWS WHAT...

I INTEND TO MAKE IT MY BUSINESS TO FIND OUT!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, TOM?

WENDY, DOESN'T IT SEEM ODD TO YOU THAT THE MOON PICKED OUT THE NEWLY DISCOVERED PORTER OIL FIELDS AS ITS TARGET? WHY WILL IT LAND THERE, IF IT WILL LAND?

OH, THAT'S JUST FATE..

OR THE FURIES! THEY STEP IN ON FATE NOW AND THEN. THEY'LL HELP ANYONE WITH EVIL IN THEIR HEARTS.. EVEN THE MAN IN THE MOON. THANKS FOR THE LIFT!

WENDY! WHAT LUCK! HOW ABOUT A LIFT HOME?

DAD! HOP IN.. I OUGHT TO PUT A FARE METER IN THIS BUGGY!

DID TOM TELL YOU HE WAS FLYING TO CALIFORNIA THIS AFTERNOON? BRAVE BOY... IT COULD BE A ONE WAY TICKET... BUT HE VOLUNTEERED. QUITE AN ASSIGNMENT FOR AN ATTORNEY.

CALIFORNIA!

I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM.

MISS FOSTER! WHAT BRINGS YOU ON THIS TRIP? MOST FOLKS ARE LEAVING WHERE WE'RE BOUND FOR.

I'M JUST LOOKING FOR SOMEONE...
OH, THERE HE IS!

TOM... OH, TOM, PLEASE LEAVE THIS PLANE WITH ME... DON'T MAKE THIS TRIP!

FASTEN YOUR BELTS, PLEASE, WE'RE ABOUT TO TAKE OFF...

OHNNHH! NOW, SEE WHAT YOU LET YOURSELF IN FOR?

TIME AND SPACE MERGE AND SOON THE GIANT SHIP LOOMS ABOVE CALIFORNIA...

TOM, LOOK! IT'S INCREDIBLE!

GREAT SCOTT! MAYBE THERE IS SOMETHING TO THIS MOON BUSINESS AFTER ALL!

WHILE BELOW...

WHERE SHALL WE GO? HELP!

BUT HERE ARE A FEW PEOPLE WHO APPEAR CALM ENOUGH!

THE OTHERS ARE WAITING FOR US, PHILIPS.

GOOD! WE'LL BE THERE SOON.

HE'S THE MOST CLEVER MAN I'VE EVER MET...

DON'T FORGET HIS DAUGHTER, SHE'S DOING HER PART.

AH, HERE ARE OUR FRIENDS, DAUGHTER!

RIGHT ON TIME!

DEEP INSIDE THE GIANT TREE
IS A STRANGE ABODE...

WELL, GENTLEMEN, YOUR FAMOUS
SCIENTISTS HAVE DECIDED THE
MOON WILL GRAZE OUR HAPPY
STATE TOMORROW NIGHT. BY
NOON THEN, CALIFORNIA SHOULD
BE COMPLETELY DESERTED!

YOUR PLANNING
HAS BEEN
AMAZING,
DRUID!

THE MOON MYSTERY IS STILL BAFFLING AS
THEIR PLANE LANDS, BUT AT LEAST TOM'S
DETERMINED ONE THING... THAT LIGHT IS AN
IMPORTANT FACTOR AND BECAUSE OF THEIR
LOW FLYING, HE'S PRETTY CERTAIN HE
KNOWS WHERE IT ORIGINATES!

REALLY, TOM, HOW
COULD YOU POSSIBLY
SLEEP WITH SO
MUCH TO SEE?

TUT-TUT, NOW.
WE'VE GOT TO
DASH IF WE
EXPECT TO GET
TO THE GOVERNOR'S
EMERGENCY COUNCIL
ON TIME.

I WAS NEVER
SO FRIGHTENED,
TOM! JUST
LOOK AT THE
MOON!

I AM LOOKING,
MONEY! LOOKING
AND THINKING!

MOST OF TOM'S
THOUGHTS
RIVET ON A
SHAFT OF
LIGHT FROM
EARTH TO
MOON, WHICH
PIERCES THE
NIGHT... IT IS
UNWAVERING
AND CONSTANT!
ANOTHER
INTERESTING
PHENOMENA
IS THE
REGULATION OF
ATMOSPHERE,
WHERE IS
THE HEAT
OR THE COLD
OR GASES
THAT SHOULD
BE PRESENT?

AT THE MEETING...

WE CAN'T QUESTION THAT
SOMETHING IS HAPPENING
TO THE MOON, NOW, GENTLEMEN.
THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO...
ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!
CALIFORNIA IS DOOMED!

I DON'T
GIVE IN
THAT
EASILY!

WHILE IN THE DRUID'S TREE HOME...

SOMEONE'S BOUND TO
COME SNOOPING AROUND
HERE SOONER OR LATER!
THAT LIGHT IS
A DEAD
GIVE-AWAY!

CALM
YOURSELF,
DAUGHTER.
AFTER TO-
MORROW
IT WON'T
MATTER A
BIT!

WELL, I MANAGED TO BUY
UP THE PORTER OIL FIELDS
TODAY AT A RIDICULOUS
FIGURE, DRUID. LIKE EVERY-
ONE ELSE, THEY'VE GOT
MOON FRIGHT!

I KNEW YOU'D
GET IT, MR.
PHILIPS!

GUIDED BY AN UNERRING INSTINCT, TOM LOCATES THE DRUID'S SECRET SHELTER, AND:

SHHHH! SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR! QUICKLY, GET HIM!

JUST AS I THOUGHT! THE SHAFT OF LIGHT FROM THE MOON TO THE EARTH HAD TO LEAD SOMEWHERE!

VERY CLEVER, STRANGER! BUT VERY SAD... FOR YOU!

REALIZING WHAT SUCH AN EXPOSE WOULD MEAN, THE DRUID'S DAUGHTER RUSHES INTO ACTION!

RELAX... HE'S THROUGH SNOOPING NOW!

WE'VE MADE ENOUGH CAPITAL. WE WON'T WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW TO FINISH OUR LITTLE GAME. WE'LL STOP NOW!

THERE WON'T EVEN BE A TRACE OF YOU LEFT TO TELL ANY TALES, HANDSOME. THIS IS GOING TO BE A FIRE TO END ALL FIRES!

THEY'VE GONE! I'VE GOT MYSELF IN A NICE MESS THIS TIME! AND NO ONE KNOWS WHERE I AM, EITHER!

FLINGING HIMSELF TO THE FLOOR, TOM WRIGHT INCHES TOWARD THE DRUID'S DESK AS THE FLAMES MOUNT...



EVEN THE DULL BLADE OF A LETTER OPENER IS BETTER THAN NOTHING... GOT TO WORK FAST... WHAT A SETUP THEY'VE BEEN OPERATING FROM...



CUTTING OUT PAPER DOLLS AT THIS POINT IS A GOOD WAY TO ROAST TO DEATH... BUT I MUST DO...



SO THIS IS THE GADGET THAT'S CAUSING ALL THE TROUBLE! GOOD THING IT'S EASY TO OPERATE... LONG RANGE SHADOW PROJECTION... SAME PRINCIPLE AS A MOVIE CAMERA... AND THIS TIME THE FEATURE WILL BE 'THE CAPTURE OF THE MOON GOULDS'... I HOPE...



ATTENTION CALIFORNIA! MOON PANIC FAKE! FIRE AT SOUTH END OF FOREST.



JUMPING SNAKES! DO YOU FELLOWS SEE WHAT I SEE?

SOUTH END OF FOREST! LET'S GO!

MAYBE WE'RE JUST GOING MOON MAD!



HOPE THE MILITIA RESPONDS TO THAT S.O.S. NOW TO GET THAT GANG... THEY CAN'T BE VERY FAR...



RACING AGAINST TIME, THE FIRE-FIGHTERS SPEED TO THE CONFLAGRATION...



MEANWHILE...

TO THE SOUTH END OF THE FOREST, CABBIE, AND STEP ON IT!

I'VE GOT AN IDEA THAT'S WHERE TOM IS.



LET ME AT THAT CAB! I THINK THERE'S STILL A CHANCE TO GET THE GANG THAT STARTED THIS DREADFUL THING!

GET TO THAT FIRE, BOYS!

OH, TOM, PROMISE ME YOU'LL BE CAREFUL!

I'M BORN LUCKY, HONEY! OUT OF MY WAY LIKE A GOOD GIRL!



THE GETAWAY CAR STEERS CRAZILY ALONG A TWISTING ROAD AND FATE GOES TO WORK... ONE CHANCE TURN, AND TOM BECOMES THE PURSUED!



FASTER, DRUCA, I THINK I CAN GET HIM!

SIT TIGHT AND HOLD EVERYTHING. I'VE GOT THE THROTTLE WIDE OPEN!

AND I SAID I WAS BORN LUCKY! BETTER GET OUT OF RANGE OF THAT ACK-ACK! I'VE GOT TO LIVE... I'M THE ONLY WITNESS TO THEIR DEVILRY!



WITH THE FIRE UNDER CONTROL, ASSISTANCE IS RUSHED TO THE DARING YOUNG ATTORNEY...

THIS IS THE TRAIL HE TOOK, SO HE SHOULD BE COMING INTO SIGHT ANY MINUTE NOW...



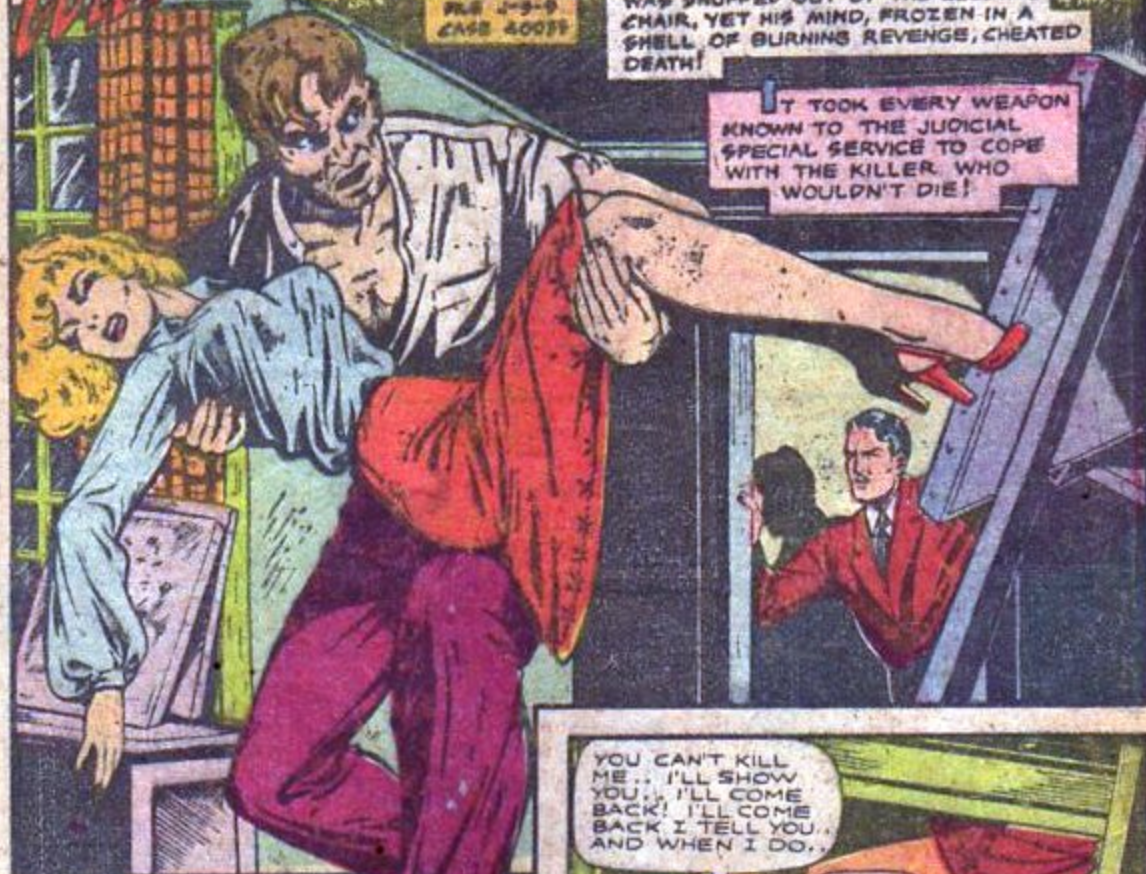


Was he DEATH-PROOF?

FILE J-9-9
CASE 40077

THE LIFE OF A BRUTAL MURDERER WAS SHUFFED OUT BY THE ELECTRIC CHAIR, YET HIS MIND, FROZEN IN A SHELL OF BURNING REVENGE, CHEATED DEATH!

IT TOOK EVERY WEAPON KNOWN TO THE JUDICIAL SPECIAL SERVICE TO COPE WITH THE KILLER WHO WOULDN'T DIE!



LATER, AT JUDGE DUNLAP'S HOME, THE CASE IS DISCUSSED WITH TOM GRANT, ONE OF THE JUDICIAL SERVICE'S TOP-NOTCH AGENTS...

I FELT RATHER STRANGE ABOUT THAT THREAT LAZZETTI MADE WHEN I PASSED SENTENCE ON HIM TODAY. HE SEEMED SO SURE THAT HE'D COME BACK...

IT IS POSSIBLE... UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS.

HELLO, RENE! HOW'S THE LITTLE ARTIST? HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN SOME TIME.

HELLO, FOLKS! A GOOD ARTIST NEEDS A GOOD SUBJECT, AND THE NEWSPAPER GAVE ME A WONDERFUL IDEA. THAT MAN YOU CONDEMNED, DAD. HE'S GOT THE MOST FASCINATING FACE!

WHY, RENE! YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO PAINT ANYONE LIKE HIM!

BUT I LIKE THE IDEA, DAD. I'M SURE YOU COULD ARRANGE IT.

PORTRAIT OF A MURDERER! MIGHT BE INTERESTING, RENE!

YOU'D HAVE TO GET THE CONDEMNED MAN'S PERMISSION, RENE, AND...

OH, I THINK I CAN GET HIM TO AGREE, AND I'M SURE TOM GRANT WILL HELP ME.

THE FOLLOWING DAY...

IT'S UP TO YOU, LAZZETTI! DO YOU WANT JUDGE DUNLAP'S DAUGHTER TO PAINT YOUR PICTURE?

THANK YOU, WARDEN.

OH, PLEASE, MR. LAZZETTI!

SURE! YEAH, WHY NOT?!

TWO DAYS LATER...

BETTER FINISH TODAY, RENE. LAZZETTI WON'T BE AVAILABLE TO-MORROW...

THE EXECUTION DOESN'T BOTHER ME, GRANT. I'LL BE BACK.

WELL, ARE YOU PLEASED WITH YOUR WORK, YOUNG LADY?

YES, MR. GRANT. BUT DID YOU NOTICE HIS EXPRESSION? IT WAS EERIE.

THAT NIGHT...

DON'T GO PRAYIN' OVER ME, PAL. I'LL BE BACK. I DON'T NEED PRAYERS.



RENÉ DUNLAP FACED THE MOST DESPERATE AND EERIE MOMENTS OF HER LIFETIME, BUT EVEN IN HER TERROR, SHE MADE A WISE DECISION...

WHAT SHALL I DO?
HE... HE'S A GHOST!
I'VE GOT TO GET
HELP!

THE SPIRIT OF THE KILLER
THAT HAD DIABOLICAL POWER
ENOUGH NOT TO DIE, TURNED
IN A NEW FRENZY...

YOU WON'T
ESCAPE ME,
NO MATTER
HOW YOU
TRY!

TOM! TOM!
OPEN!
LAZZETTI
HAS RETURNED!
HE'S GOT MY
FATHER!



RENÉ! WHAT'D
I HEAR YOU
SAY?

IT'S TRUE!
OH, COME...
QUICKLY!



BREATHLESS
MINUTES LATER...

HE'S BEEN
ATTACKED, ALL
RIGHT, BUT IT
SEEMS WEIRD
TO BLAME IT ON
A GHOST!

I REALIZE HOW IT MAY SOUND TO
YOU, OFFICER, BUT YOU'VE GOT
TO BELIEVE IT. MEANWHILE I'D
LIKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THAT
PICTURE YOU PAINTED, RENÉ.

P-PICTURE?

THANK
GOODNESS
YOU GOT HERE
IN TIME,
GRANT!



CHIN UP RENÉ. I'VE
NOTIFIED THE DEPARTMENT
WE'VE GOT TO GET
BACK TO YOUR
HOUSE... THERE
MAY STILL BE A
CHANCE...

IT'S FANTASTIC!
OH, POOR
FATHER...

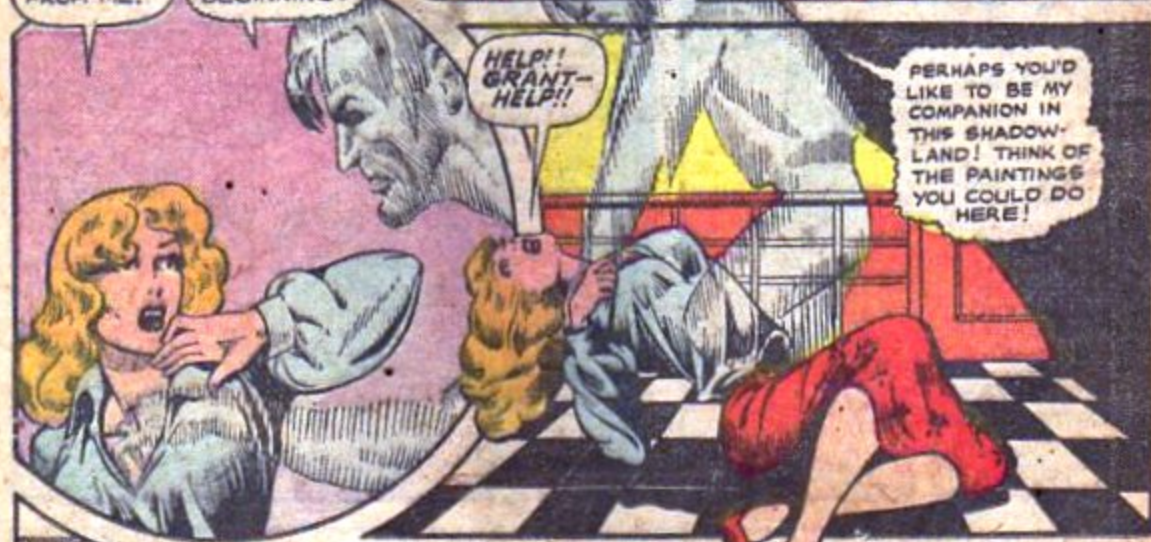


IT'S BLANK!
WH-WHAT'S
HAPPENED?

I WAS
AFRAID
OF THIS



REALIZING THE DANGER THAT STILL SURROUNDS THEM, GRANT ACTS SWIFTLY...



MANY ARE THE INSTRUMENTS OF SCIENCE KNOWN TO THE MEN WHO WAR AGAINST CRIME, AND TOM GRANT POSSESSES ONE OF THE MOST MODERN...

RENE... USE THE DETECTOR! HURRY! IT'S RADIO-ACTIVE RAY WILL DISINTEGRATE HIM! HURRY!

YOU'RE TOO LATE, GHOST MEDDLER!

I DON'T KNOW HOW THIS MACHINE WORKS, BUT I MUST. I'LL PRESS EVERY BUTTON ON IT...

IT'S WORKING!

AHHHHHHH

GOOD GIRL...

LOOK! THE CANVAS HAS SHRIVELED!

YES, HE'S GONE FOREVER THIS TIME, RENE!

WHAT THE...

I'M GLAD THAT YOU WITNESSED WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT PAINTING... I'LL USE YOUR NAME AS WITNESS TO THE FINISH OF THE CASE, OFFICER!

IT'S INCREDIBLE, MR. GRANT. WAIT 'TIL HEADQUARTERS HEARS THIS ONE!

THE END

TERROR IN THE TOMB

By JOHN MARTIN

SLOWLY, Marsha Hunt walked upstairs through the winding stairwell of the old mansion. Before her the shadows that had always haunted it when she had been Marsha Coyd and married to Gregory Coyd, fled before her as if in terror. Behind, they seemed to close in, whispering as if in response to the grim beat of her heart.

At the door to her bedroom she paused, glancing again at the letter. So, her husband had been a liar. He was not worth half a million as he had so glibly said before they had decided to kill old Gregory Coyd. Green Hunt was penniless, a worthless fortune-hunter.

Marsha did not blush in the shadows for herself. She was not at all ashamed of her part in the murder of Gregory Coyd. Her extravagances had drained old Coyd's fortune to the point where her very existence in high society was threatened. Then she had met Green Hunt. Hunt had turned her head. Flashy, well-dressed, he had suavely dazzled her. Later, it was he who suggested killing Gregory Coyd so he and Marsha could be married. Coyd had been adamant against granting Marsha a divorce.

She went into her room and silently extracted the bottle of aconites from a secret drawer. It was the poison she and Green had used to kill Gregory Coyd. In the dim light her face was a mask. What could kill one man could kill another. Gregory had died practically penniless, without insurance. But she knew that Green's life was insured for a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. She had seen to that. Green Hunt had put it down to sincere affection on her part for him. But Marsha had known otherwise. It was insurance for more than one thing; it was also insurance against the possibility that Green Hunt had lied when he told her he had half a million.

Now both of them were paupers. Soon the house would go for taxes. Soon, she herself would have to seek some commonplace job. Again, in the darkness she smiled acidly. It was a little difficult imagining Green Hunt supporting a wife in some little vine-covered cottage or a grimy city apartment. Again she glanced at the bottle of aconites. It was a way out, but it was too dangerous. Her first husband's death had been laid to an accident. Her second's

Hunt's death must look entirely natural. He had a bad heart, she knew. Abruptly her eyes lifted. Through the window, far back up the sloping lawn she could see the Coyd family vault in which Gregory lay buried, cool, white and glistening in the evening twilight.

MARSHA Hunt smiled. She put the aconites away. There would be no need for poison. Other things could help her, things intangible as emptiness, imponderable as the unknown. She stiffened as she heard the downstairs door open and close. That would be Green. And he had let himself in. The servants had all long ago given notice and gone for lack of salary.

Marsha swept downstairs and into the drawing room. Green stood there, sardonic. He glanced at the letter in her hand.

"So you know," he said, smiling narrowly.

"I know," she replied.

"Well, we're quite equal now, Marsha. We're both paupers," he said. He went over to a desk, opened a drawer and began packing papers into a briefcase.

"What are you doing?" she asked suddenly, a chill going through her.

He looked up. "Come now, my dear, you don't think I'm staying, do you? You don't think I really loved you, do you—any more than you loved me?" He shrugged. "Of course not. I'm going, that's all. I'll make it easy, Marsha. I'll go very quietly. But really . . ." he burst out laughing. "You wouldn't expect me to stay? Not with better game elsewhere?"

Behind her mask the thoughts stormed. Going! By itself that was not bad. But he must not go; instead he must die. Imperturbably she smiled. "You forget, it's Friday the 13th, Green." She knew how superstitious he was.

"Oh?" He frowned. "True. How thoughtful of you to mention it, Marsha. It would be bad to make any important move on such a day. Well, I'll stay—to dinner." He smiled archly. "Which I suppose you will have to cook."

She nodded. "But first a walk, dear. Our last night together—you know?"

Marsha Hunt's heart beat rapidly. Green

He nodded, took her hand. "I'm sorry, Marsha," he said smoothly. "I really am. But what else could I do? I'm a man used to comforts. And I know where to get them. In our case I—shall we say—failed. Perhaps I hurt you. But you hurt me too, Marsha. We both lied. No hard feelings?"

She looked at him, the mask of her face still hiding her true thoughts. Oh, how she hated him, she thought. But she merely smiled blandly.

"No hard feelings, Green," she agreed.

Together they walked out onto the lawn. The lights of Houses gleamed fitfully. Smiling to herself, Marsha guided their steps up to the tomb. It gleamed ghostly in the soft moonlight, its heavy, wrought door a dark, staring eye. Beneath their feet the ground was soft—soft as a new-filled grave, Marsha thought. A moment later they were passing the tomb. On every side was silence, broken only by the dry, gaunt noises of night creatures.

"Must we walk by the tomb, my dear?" Green asked distastefully.

MARSHA glanced at him. His face was white. Inwardly she smiled. How afraid of death and the dead he was! Ghoulishly she relished the situation.

"Green, my dear, do me a great favor, will you," she began softly. "You know, I haven't been able to find my sapphire locket anywhere. I—I believe I lost it when they interred Gregory, during the service. The tomb's never been locked. Will—will you open the door and just poke around? I was standing quite close to the door . . ."

Now Green's face was paler than ever.

"Marsha . . ." he began protestingly. She saw him swallow hard.

"Surely you're not afraid?" she asked, mockingly.

"Afraid? N-No—of course not! Here, I'll use my lighter." He stepped close to the tomb door, spun the wheel of his cigarette lighter. Mustering his strength he pushed it open just enough to get in. Marsha watched as he disappeared within. The flame of the lighter wavered eerily within as Green Hunt stooped to look for the sapphire locket. Beyond, Marsha could see the black-draped coffin of Gregory Coyd, across which the shadow of Green's arm was suddenly thrown. She reached for the handle of the tomb door, pulled on it with all her strength. For an instant it resisted, then began to shut.

"Marsha!" From within Green Hunt cried out in terror. "Marsha—what are you doing? Marsha—for God's sake, stop!"

The heavy door clanged shut. Instantly Marsha slipped the key she had secreted in her hand inside the lock and turned it. A drumming of fists sounded like low, distant thunderclaps on the door.

"Marsha!" Green's voice was very distant now. Marsha smiled, turning. She knew she would not have to wait long.

She retraced her steps to the house. She would wait an hour. In any case, whether Green's heart gave out or not, the air inside the hermetically sealed tomb would not last long. A bad heart needed much oxygen. When the hour had passed she would return, open the tomb door again, drag Green Hunt's body into the open. She could always claim he had died suddenly of heart failure as they were walking together in the garden. The servants had all gone. No one would know. Perhaps her reputation would be lessened. Marsha did not care. All she could think of was her husband's insurance money.

When the hour was up she left the house, plodded quickly up the slope toward the tomb. The night had grown deeper, more silent. She paused, listening. There was no sound. At the tomb door she inserted the key, turned it. The lock clicked. She pushed heavily on the door which opened slowly. Inside, lit by a ray of moonlight that came through the door, prone on its back, lay the dead body of Green Hunt.

She stepped inside, carefully, her heart dancing with joy. She bent toward Hunt's dead body. And then Marsha Hunt suddenly screamed.

She shrank back from the corpse, staring, horrified, at the red, livid marks on its throat. Green Hunt had not died of heart failure—but of strangulation!

Then a hideous burst of laughter rang through the vault, turning her blood to ice. She whirled. The coffin was open and standing beside it was the stiff, waxen-faced corpse of her first husband, Gregory Coyd!

"I — waited — for — him — and — now — I've — got — you!"

Frozen to the spot, she watched as the claw-like hands stretched out for her, hands stained with the blood from Green Hunt's neck, hands that would soon crimson a red necklace of vengeance around her own!

I am MURDER...



...THE UNWELCOME CHILD OF PASSION AND TERROR, NO DOUBT YOU'VE HEARD OF MY CAPRICIOUSNESS! YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN ME IN A LITTLE DEADLY GAME...

"RIGHT IN HERE, I'VE BEEN WATCHING THIS PLACE FOR SOME TIME..."



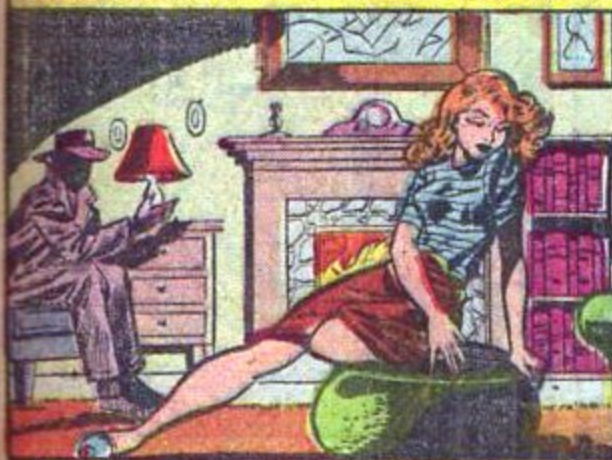
"SHE LIVES ALONE, VERY STRANGE GIRL. HATES LIGHT! NEVER, NEVER DOES SHE PERMIT LIGHT ABOUT HER! THERE'S A REASON, OF COURSE, THE SILLIEST THING CAUSED HER MIND TO SNAP..."



SHE WAS ONCE ENGAGED TO A ROGUE. OH, HOW SHE LOVED THAT UNFAITHFUL CAD. IT'S TRUE HE FANCIED HER...BUT ANOTHER CONVINCED HIM THE TROTH WAS UNTIMELY! SHE EVEN PRODUCED A LETTER FOR THE WEAKLING TO SIGN AND POST, WHICH HE DID. THE LETTER INFORMED LITTLE BERYL DANIELS HER WEDDING WAS NOT TO BE. THE RIDICULOUS REASON BEING HER LITTER UGLINESS AND THE POSTSCRIPT ADDED IT WAS DOUBTFUL IF ANY MAN COULD TOLERATE IT...

SHE GRIEVED HERSELF INTO A MORBID STATE OF PHOTOPHOBIA, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR HER AVERSION TO LIGHT. I, PERSONALLY, PREFER IT THIS WAY. THE DARK USUALLY LEADS TO INTERESTING EVENTS...

HA! SOMEONE AT THE DOOR!



A GUN! I TOLD YOU THIS WOULD LEAD TO SOMETHING...

WHO IS IT?

HELLO, INSIDE!

WHO SENT YOU HERE?

NO ONE... I'M LOST... THE STORM— MAY I COME IN?

YOU AREN'T WELCOME HERE, BUT YOU MAY COME IN OUT OF THE RAIN...



OH! PARDON... I'M CLUMSY...

SIT OVER THERE... BY THE FIRE...

THANK YOU. DO YOU LIVE ALONE HERE?

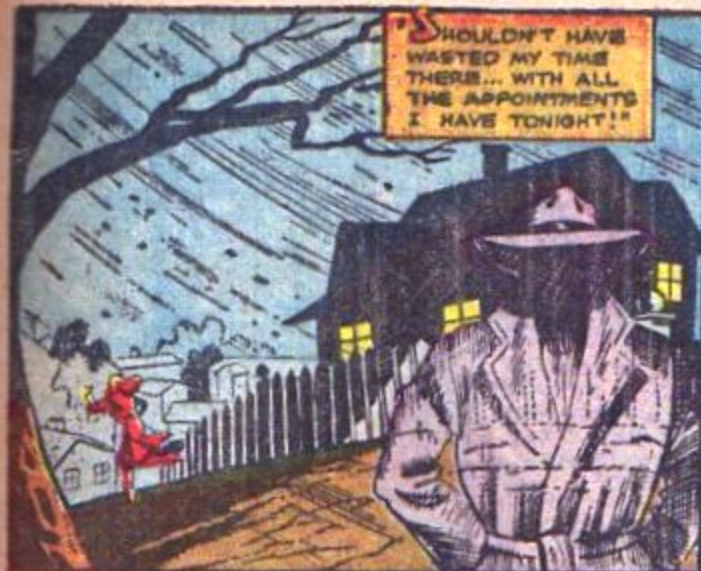
YES.











"I SHOULDN'T HAVE WASTED MY TIME THERE... WITH ALL THE APPOINTMENTS I HAVE TONIGHT!"



HURRY, DOCTOR! AT MY HOUSE... I SHOT A MAN...

WELL, I'LL BE! BERYL DANIELS!



WHY, IT'S BILL KING!

HELP ME! HELP ME! MY EYES! SOMETHING'S HAPPENED... I THINK... MY SIGHT...



I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS! THAT BULLET ACTED AS SHOCK THERAPY! YOU'RE NOT THE FIRST VETERAN TO GO THROUGH THIS, BILL!



I KNEW YOU WERE BEAUTIFUL... BUT I NEVER EXPECTED YOU WERE THIS BEAUTIFUL!

HOW CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME?



BECAUSE OF THE STRANGE NATURE OF THIS CASE, I'M NOT GOING TO REPORT IT! YOU TWO HAVE A LOT OF LIVING TO CATCH UP WITH... GOOD LUCK TO YOU BOTH!

THE PLAYFUL EXECUTIONER

WELL, GEORGE MASON, ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME? DON'T HIDE BEHIND A PAPER WHEN I SPEAK TO YOU! I BET YOU DIDN'T HEAR A WORD I SAID!

PLEASE DON'T SHOUT, DEAR, I HEAR YOU...

THIS IS THE STORY OF A MILD-NATURED MAN WHOSE WIFE PLAGUED HIM WITH HER CONSTANT NAGGING, AND OF A STRANGE SPIRIT WHO REVELED IN UNHAPPINESS. IT IS A STORY THAT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU... IF SUCH A SPIRIT CHOSE YOU TO TAUNT AND HAUNT!

GEORGE WAS A HANDYMAN AROUND HIS HOME, BUT SOMEHOW HE ALWAYS FORGOT TO MEND THE TORN SCREEN ON THE DOOR...



GEORGE HAD PATIENTLY TRIED TO ACQUIRE THE FACULTY OF NOT HEARING THE SHRILL VOICE OF HIS SPOUSE, BUT WITHOUT LUCK... THERE WAS NO SHUTTING OUT HER RANTING...

DON'T SIT THERE ALL MORNING! ARE YOU GOING TO GO TO WORK TODAY OR AREN'T YOU?

WISH I COULD GET AWAY FOR A WHILE. BUT WHAT GOOD WOULD IT DO? SHE'D COME ALONG WITH ME NO DOUBT!

OUCH!

DAY STAR
WRECK ON LIRR. MAN SHOTS WIFE!

SO THAT WAS A BAD NICK! IT'S ALMOST AS IF I WERE CURSED SOMEHOW! WELL, I SUPPOSE I SHOULDN'T COMPLAIN, AT LEAST IT'S NOT SO BAD AT THE OFFICE!

THAT'S STRANGE! WONDER WHY IT DIDN'T POP UP? CAN'T STAND BURN'T TOAST...

GO AHEAD! NOW THAT YOU'VE SMOKED UP MY KITCHEN! CAN'T EVEN WATCH THE TOASTER, I HOPE YOU CAN MANAGE TO FIND YOUR WAY TO WORK!

AND GET HOME EARLY, I HAVE PLENTY FOR YOU TO DO AROUND HERE!

YES, DEAR...

GEORGE'S JOB WASN'T IMPORTANT OR EXCITING, BUT AT LEAST IT WAS THE ONE PLACE HE COULD GET AWAY FROM THE SERATING OF HIS WIFE... AT HIS DESK HE FELT LIKE A DIFFERENT PERSON...



GEORGE, I'D LIKE A WORD WITH YOU...

SURE THING, BOSS...



TOMORROW IS SALLY'S BIRTHDAY. I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A PLEASANT SURPRISE IF WE REMEMBERED HER, SEEING SHE HADN'T ANY FAMILY TO DO SO!



JUST LOOK AT THAT TYPEWRITER RIBBON! NOW HOW COULD THAT HAPPEN?



WELL, I'LL JUST HAVE TO FIX IT. SALLY'S BIRTHDAY! I WOULD BE BROKE... NOT THAT I EVER HAVE ANY MONEY TO SPARE...



WANT SOME HELP, GEORGE?

NO, THANKS, SALLY.

SHE SURE IS SWEET...



IT CERTAINLY TOOK
YOU LONG ENOUGH TO
GET HOME! OR DON'T I
GET ANY CONSIDERATION
AT ALL? MY GOOD ROAST
COULD BURN FOR ALL YOU
CARE!

IT'S SALLY'S BIRTHDAY
DEAR, AND THE BOSS
SUGGESTED WE GIVE
HER...

GIVE HER! IT'S NICE THAT
YOU HAVE SUCH A BIG HEART
WITH STRANGERS, GEORGE
MASON! WE'RE NOT SPENDING
A CENT ON THAT WOMAN!



BUT I'VE GOT
TO GET SOME-
THING...



THOSE ROSES! YES,
THAT'S IT! I COULD
BRING HER A ROSE
JUST TO SHOW HER
SHE'S REMEMBERED!



I'LL WORK MY
PUZZLE... SHE
WON'T COME
DOWN HERE...



IF SHE'D ONLY BE MORE
PATIENT... AND STOP
NAGGING AT ME ALL THE
TIME... A MAN SHOULD
HAVE SOME RIGHTS IN
HIS OWN HOME...



WELL, TODAY'S YOUR PRECIOUS MISS SALLY'S BIRTHDAY! TOO BAD SHE WON'T BE GETTING THAT EXPENSIVE GIFT SHE'S EXPECTING FROM YOU!

THAT'S UNKIND. SHE'S NOT EXPECTING ANYTHING. SHE DOESN'T EVEN THINK WE KNOW IT'S HER BIRTHDAY...

IT'S GOING TO BE EMBARRASSING, TOO, AFTER THE BOSS TOOK THE TROUBLE TO REMIND ME... WISH I HAD SOME LITTLE THING.

I'LL GIVE YOU SOME... POOO! WHAT HAPPENED TO MY COFFEE?



GOLLY, SHE DIDN'T USE TO NAG AT ME SO MUCH... OR MAYBE I'M JUST BEGINNING TO NOTICE IT!

NOW HOW'D THAT BIG ROCK GET THERE?



I'LL JUST PUSH IT OVER HERE FOR NOW! OH! THE ROSE! I ALMOST FORGOT! THAT'S WHAT I CAN BRING!



GEORGE! GEORGE, WHO TIED ALL THESE KNOTS IN MY APRON STRINGS? THAT'S RIGHT, HURRY AWAY WITHOUT ANSWERING!



GEORGE! HOW LOVELY! IT JUST COULDN'T BE SWEETER!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SALLY. I'M NOT GOOD AT SPEECHES, BUT I CAN SAY THE ROSE'S SWEETNESS IS SECOND TO YOURS!



Y- YOU'RE
MARRIED,
AREN'T YOU,
GEORGE?

YES, MAM, I'VE
BEEN MARRIED FOR
SOME TIME.

IT IS SAID THAT EVERY DAY IS A NEW
ADVENTURE, BUT GENTLE-HEARTED
GEORGE WOULD NEVER THINK TO APPLY
SUCH REASONING TO HIMSELF... HE
WOULDN'T DREAM THAT THIS WAS TO BE
A VERY BIG DAY IN HIS UNEXCITING LIFE...



SUPPOSE HE ACTS
LIKE A DAPPER DAN
AROUND THAT HUGGY
IN HIS OFFICE! WELL,
HE'D BETTER NOT
LET ME HEAR ABOUT IT!

IT WOULD BE JUST
LIKE THAT MAN TO
HOLD OUT SOME
CHANGE ON ME!

AND ANOTHER THING,
I'M GOING TO MAKE
HIM ASK FOR A
RAISE FROM THAT
NASTY OLD
CHARACTER, HE
WORKS FOR!

SPINELESS IDIOT! WHY I
MARRIED HIM, I'LL NEVER
KNOW! HE MAKES MY
LIFE UNBEARABLE!





NOW FIX THE RUG! ONLY YESTERDAY I TACKED THAT TEAR!

I DON'T SEE WHY YOU WON'T BUY A NEW ONE...

I PUT THAT RUG MONEY IN MY OWN PRIVATE BANK ACCOUNT! I CONSIDER MYSELF MORE IMPORTANT THAN A STAIRCASE!



ANYONE WHO'S GOT A MOUSE OF A HUSBAND LIKE YOU ARE, IS A FOOL NOT TO THINK OF THEIR OWN FUTURE!



IF IT WAS UP TO YOU, I'D - OHHHH!

HER HEAD... HANGS SO LIMP! OH, NO... THIS IS DREADFUL! H-HER NECK IS BROKEN!



IT WAS MANY DAYS BEFORE POOR GEORGE RETURNED TO HIS JOB... AND NOW HE WAS TO PLAY A NEW ROLE ON LIFE'S STAGE, FOR HE WAS NOW A WIDOWER...

YOU NEED A CHANGE OF JOBS, GEORGE. HOW ABOUT MANAGING THE OFFICE FOR ME?

THAT SOUNDS MIGHTY GOOD, SIR...

SEEING THAT GEORGE HAS SUCH AN IMPORTANT JOB, I SUPPOSE I WON'T GET TO SEE HIM AT ALL!

PRIVATE

I KNOW I'M TERRIBLE, BUT I HAD HOPED...

SALLY. HOW GOOD IT IS TO BE AROUND HER AGAIN! NOW I CAN ADMIT TO MYSELF I'VE ALWAYS BEEN FOND OF HER...

HELLO, SALLY... OOOH!

GEORGE! WHY, HOW'D THAT WASTE BASKET GET THERE?

A-ARE YOU HURT?

NO, BUT I SURE FEEL SILLY!

WHY, GEORGE, YOU SEEM CHANGED! I EXPECTED... BUT YOU LOOK SO WELL!

I FEEL GOOD TOO, SALLY! ESPECIALLY GOOD TO BE BACK HERE... WITH YOU!

The End

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